



"Glengarry" Brass Balls

Written By: Paul Spinrad



PARTS:

- [Balls \(2\)](#)
[part #BAL154 from Liberty Brass \(libertybrass.com\), \\$13](#)
- [Setscrews \(2\)](#)
[part #91318A410 from McMaster-Carr \(mcmaster.com\)](#)
- [Cord \(1\)](#)
[Try your local craft store or part #SCN3Y-N2 from The Satin Cord Store \(satincord.com\).](#)
- [Epoxy \(1\)](#)

SUMMARY

My friend Ed and I love quoting from the movie Glengarry Glen Ross, especially the plot-inciting speech by Alec Baldwin's character, in which he informs a veteran sales team that they will now compete against each other to keep their jobs ("Third prize: you're fired.")

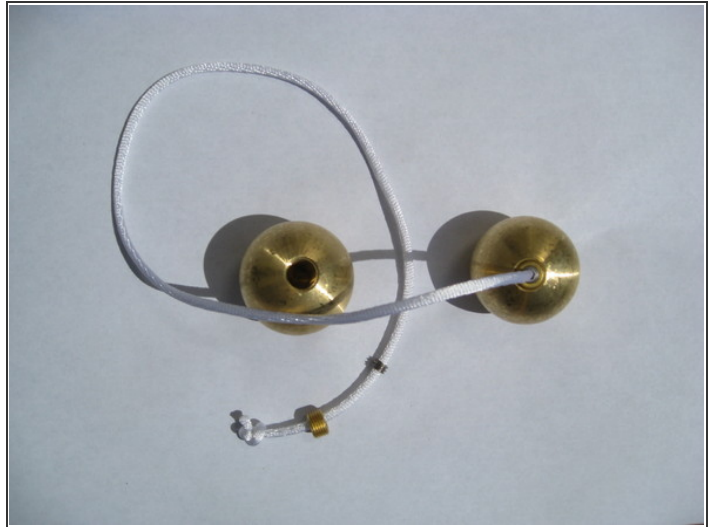
Toward the end of his harangue, he reverently reaches into his attaché case and produces two brass balls on a cord, saying, "It takes brass balls to sell real estate."

It's a memorable image, and I've always wondered why SkyMall doesn't sell high-quality brass balls as a desktop "executive toy" or motivational prize. Maybe they feel it would be in poor taste or politically incorrect, or maybe they're afraid of lawsuits over something that could so easily crush a skull (brass balls are heavy). But to my mind, these considerations

just make the object more appealing.

I decided to replicate the balls, and once I figured out how to securely connect the cord, it was simple. You can put these together in 2 minutes with no tools other than scissors to cut the cord and a flame to singe the ends.

Step 1 — Assemble the balls.



- To make them, cut about 2' of cord, thread a setscrew on each end, tie a knot, and screw it into the ball. You can use epoxy or threadlocker to make the connection permanent.
- The balls I ordered already had brass setscrews that reduced their original bores to 1/4-20, and the knot probably wouldn't slip out of those, but adding the smaller setscrews makes the connection neater and more secure.
- I used a white cord for authenticity, but I think a black one would add a nice formal touch for evening occasions.

I gave the brass balls to Ed and he got a kick out of them. He works in management at a large, sales-driven company, so I hope he puts them on his desk.

This project first appeared in [MAKE Volume 21](#).

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